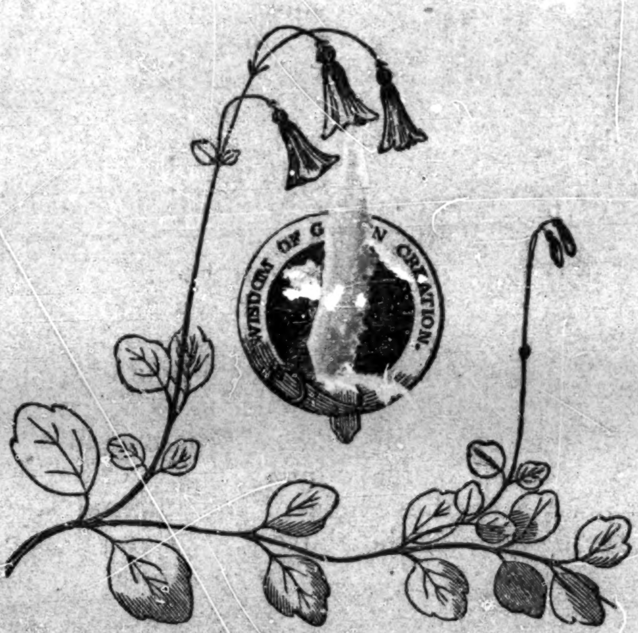
An APPENDIX for 1851 is this day published, Price 1s.

No. CXXIX. FEBRUARY, MDCCCLII. Price 1s.

THE

PHYTOLOGIST:

A BOTANICAL JOURNAL.


WISDOM OF G... CREATION.

TANTUS AMOR FLORUM.

LONDON:
JOHN VAN VOORST, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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Objects prepared for the Microscope.—Dr. Adolph Oschatz, at Berlin (Stallschreiber-strasse, No. 33), has for some years occupied himself with preparing phytological, zoological, and geological objects for the use of the microscope. With a machine of his own invention he has been enabled to give these preparations a finish, and to dissect objects, hitherto attempted in vain, by even the most skilful opticians. Lecturers will find in the collection he has made ample materials for illustrating every branch of natural history; and it is to be hoped that the public will know how to appreciate the services of a man who has laboured so ardently to facilitate the study of physiological science. We shall recur to this subject, and at present confine ourselves to stating that the price of each preparation varies from 1 to 3 shillings. —*X. Y. Z.*

Drying Succulent Plants.—In reference to the inquiry of Mr. Bladon in the 'Notes and Queries' last month, I can state that I have had much experience in drying plants, and found a difficulty at first with the succulent ones, not being able to preserve their colours. I have now for upwards of twelve months used Bentall's botanical drying paper, which I find strongly recommended by all I meet who use it. I now find the facility with which I can dry plants generally far beyond my expectations. I have adopted artificial heat also with success, but find that experience will alone teach what temperature is most suitable, as it will vary with different plants. Three things are essential in drying plants: first, use plenty of paper; secondly, change the same frequently, once or twice a day at the least; and thirdly, be sure that the paper they are changed into is *quite* dry (if hot from the fire or oven so much the better). For succulent plants particularly the following addition is necessary:—If small, prick freely, with a large pin, throughout their whole length, the stems and veins of the leaves; if large, make incisions *quite through* the stems and veins of the leaves, which will allow the moisture, otherwise confined by the epidermis, to escape on *both* sides of the plant. In some instances a portion or the whole of the internal structure may be removed. Having adopted the above plan, I find little or no difficulty in drying even succulent plants of their natural colour.—*F. Y. Brocas, Basingstoke.*

Supposed Discovery of Gymnogramma leptophylla in Scotland.—When I was in Madeira a lady of the name of Veitch, whom we knew there, showed me a small, dried specimen of a fern which she had gathered in Scotland, I think in Aberdeenshire, and which was, to all appearance, precisely the same as the Gymnogramma leptophylla of Madeira.—*William Tanner, Ashley Grange, Bristol, Dec.* 22, 1851.

[There is no climatal or geographical improbability to be urged as an objection to the finding this pretty little fern in Aberdeenshire. It occurs in precisely similar situations, at an elevation of about 800 or 1000 yards on the Swiss Alps; and it is so humble a plant, that our Wilsons, and Watsons, and Borrers, in their unfrequent visits to North Britain, may very possibly have overlooked it. It was believed by my valued correspondent, the Colonel Bory de St. Vincent, to be *annual* on the Alps. If so, the character distinguishes it from all other species with which I am acquainted.—*E. N.*]

Potato Disease.

It is well known that, not only in England, but also in other parts of the world, a belief is current that the introduction of railways has caused the mischief among the potatoes; that the steam and smoke have fallen upon the leaves, and, by a process variously described, proved fatal to the health of the plant. If the thoughtless many entertain such views it can only provoke a smile, but if the thinking few have opinions, if not the same, at least equally absurd, there is reason to assume a more serious countenance. Nearly every scientific man has tried to account for the strange malady, and shown—to his own satisfaction—its true cause. Yet it must be confessed, humiliating as it is, that not one has been able to force his opinion upon more than a limited number of converts. The mystery remains as dark as ever. Like many other phenomena of Nature, the fact of its existence is known: the*how* and *why* are unknown. A Swiss Professor, whose name, for his own sake, we suppress, has tried to dispel the darkness, and discovered a light where it was least expected. He found that a too great accumulation of phosphorus caused the tubers to become rotten. And whence does the phosphorus come? According to our learned friend, from nothing else save the frequent use of phosphoric matches. Had we, like our forefathers, been less impatient to get fire, and, instead of employing lucifers, stuck to the flint and steel, we should not now have to hear the cry of distress from every district in which the potato forms the chief portion of subsistence. Though having no desire to be classed among the thoughtless many, nor any pretension to place ourselves among the thinking few, and though we do not want to launch another hypothesis on the ocean of conjecture, we may be allowed to hint that the potato disease existed long before the invention of railways, and many years before the use of flint and steel was universally relinquished. X. Y. Z.

January 24, 1852.

Occurrence of Ruppia maritima, Linn., *in the North of England.*

By John G. Baker, Esq.

Whilst examining the maritime plants of the neighbourhood of the Tees' mouth last autumn, I met with the true Ruppia maritima of Linneus and Babington's Manual, in the broad salt-water ditch bordering the inland bank of the Redcar and Middlesborough Railway, for about a mile, between the village of Coatham and Lazenby Station. I have not before heard of its occurrence on any but the south coast of England, though most likely, when better known, it will be found to be not uncommon, at least on the east coast, as it grows in that neighbourhood in great abundance, and was the only species I found on the Yorkshire side of the estuary of Redcar. It may be readily distinguished from R. rostellata, *Koch*, even before the fruit is matured, by its much larger size, elongated peduncles, inflated sheaths, and the perceptible breadth of the leaves. I shall be glad to furnish specimens to any botanist that is not acquainted with it.

John G. Baker.

January, 1852.

[*The above papers will appear in their proper place next month.*]

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